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UNCLAS HARARE 002100

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR J. FRAZER
LONDON FOR C. GURNEY
PARIS FOR C. NEARY
NAIROBI FOR T. PFLAUMER
DS/OP/AF

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: POLICE BEAT ARRESTEES AFTER NCA DEMONSTRATION IN
DOWNTOWN HARARE

[1](#)1. (SBU) On October 22, police arrested 180-300 demonstrators including National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) Director Dr. Lovemore Madhuku, during a demonstration organized by the NCA at Africa Unity Square in downtown Harare. The demonstration advocated a new constitution. Police confiscated t-shirts, banners, and placards which read, "we are prepared to die for a new democratic constitution". The arrestees are being held at Harare Central Police Station. Police kicked seven lawyers out of the station, under threat of beating or tear gas; lawyers are being denied access to the arrestees. Prominent human rights lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa said she saw police beat young arrestees with rubber truncheons as they alighted from a police vehicle and were made to run into the yard of the police station. Legal representation is being handled by the Legal Defense Fund (LDF), a program of the local NGO the Legal Resources Foundation (LRF). Eileen Sawyer, ex-Director of LRF, said that two Herald reporters were also arrested with the crowd and were being detained.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Mtetwa said she overheard police shouting commands to take away the arrestees cell phones, deny them any communication with the outside, and lock them up. She said it was very likely that the arrestees would be spread around to various police stations in the Harare area overnight, as the cells at Harare Central could not accommodate this many detainees.
SULLIVAN